1: Conzemius M-4, 5 (1921) 1932
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handles.[11] These conditions are not yet apparent on the hands of children.

HAIR.—All these Indians have an abundance of hair growth extending very low over the forehead, but it is very scarce on the other parts of the body. The hair is usually black, and very straight and coarse, but occasionally hair with very long low waves may be met with among the pure Indians. Gray and white hair occurs sometimes but not by far as frequently as among the white race. Baldness is practically unknown. Beard growth is very scarce, while chest hair is totally absent among the pure Indians.

LONGEVITY.—There are no reliable figures to be obtained regarding the age of the older Indians. Very few of them seem to have passed their sixtieth or seventieth birthday; still during the years 1917–1922 the writer met a number of Indians who were about 4 to 6 years old at the great eruption of the volcano Cosegüina on the Bay of Fonseca in 1835. This catastrophe, which was accompanied by great earthquakes, is still spoken of by these Indians as the "Great Darkness" (M.: *tûkaya-tara;* S.: *puk-sasi, puk-barak*);[12] a thick rain of ashes poured over the coast at the time and the sun was as invisible as at night.

DEFORMITIES.—In former days deformed children were not allowed to grow up; they were either buried alive or left to starve. This accounts for the rare cases of deformities encountered among these Indians. Only the strong and healthy being allowed to grow up and produce children, there is little variety of physical and mental development. Even were such a deformed child allowed to grow up, it would not easily find a mate and would die without leaving any children behind. In civilized countries deformities are propagated, as such people will find someone to marry them if they have fortune.

If an Indian has some deformed limb, either brought with it into the world or the result of an accident, he will secrete it as much as possible from the sight of other people, as such is considered a great disgrace. It would be an insult to ask him to show it or to even refer to it.[13] In case of a dispute among Indians one will immediately pick out the weak points in the personal appearance of his adversary.

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[11] See the illustration given by Schultz (69).

[12] The abbreviations for the tribal names used in the present study are the following: M.=Miskito; S.=Sumu; T.=Twahka; P.=Panamaka; U.=Ulwa.

[13] At the Sanaus village on Rio Coco the writer knew a Miskito who had lost several fingers on one hand through an accident at the gold mines of Pispis; from that time on he always carried a bandage around the mutilated hand. In the same village a young boy, having lost several toes, was continually wearing a shoe on that foot, although the other foot was always bare.

3: Pijoan D-5 (ca. 1945) 1946
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comparison. The dietary in urban areas of coastal ports is predominantly one of imported and home grown cereal grains, whereas the river Indians consume a greater quantity of meats and fresh fruits. On the basis of the investigation by Roberts[25] it may be presumed that the variation in diet may account for the impairment of growth of coastal Indians. In specific physical anthropology there is sufficient reference elsewhere (vide Schultz[26]).

The Miskito Indians have an abundance of hair growth extending low over the forehead; it is scarce on other parts of the body. The hair is commonly black and very straight, although several Indians were noted who had reddishbrown (a metallic auburn) shade of hair. Gray and white hair rare and beard growth is very scarce. Chest and pubic hair is absent among pure Indians.

Although there are no accurate figures dealing with longevity the impression gained was that once an Indian lived to be over twenty years of age he had good chances for old age. Conzemius[1] in 1922 met a number of Indians who were young children during the volcanic eruption of Coseguina on the bay of Fonseca in 1835. Our survey revealed a number of Indians who remembered missionaries who had been in the territory sixty or seventy years ago. The Indians themselves informed us that many die between the ages of fifty and sixty years of age, with the chief cause of death being the fever (malaria). As will be shown, infectious disease takes a heavy toll of life during infancy and in early senescence. It is to be noted that the situation may change and the death rate in later life may increase. In former days sickly and deformed children were either buried alive or starved to death. Only the strong and healthy were allowed to grow up. Today there is no such control; Indians with deformities will secrete them or bandage the part involved; tolerance to diseased people has increased.

GENERAL CUSTOMS OF THE MISKITO

Today the men wear loose cotton shirts *(prak)* and trousers *(transis)*; the shirt tails are usually not tucked in. The older boys wear a similar garment but commonly among youngsters the dress is chiefly a loin or breech cloth *(palpura)* or nothing at all. Many of the women wear dresses *(prak)* although some of them and the girls wear a piece of cloth *(kualuntura)* which is wrapped about the hips and extends

[25] Roberts, L. J.; Blair, R.; Leuning, E., and Scott, M. Effect of a milk supplement on the physical status of institutional children: I. Growth in height and weight (pp. 287-300). II. Ossification of the bones of the wrist (pp. 494-509). III. Progress of dental caries (pp. 805-823). Amer. Jour. Dis. Children, 1938, 56.